

Families of HMM-261 (REIN) Raging Bulls:

As we continue our deployment, I want to provide you all with a quick update on the deployment activities of the Raging Bulls of HMM-261 (REIN).

HMM-261 (REIN) COMPLETES HUMANITARIAN RELIEF MISSION...

The Raging Bulls of HMM-261 (REIN) have just successfully completed Operation SEA ANGEL II, a humanitarian relief mission in the country of Bangladesh that provided immediate aid to their citizens who were impacted by last month's Cyclone Sidr. During our time off the coastline of this country, the entire Squadron was actively involved in delivering water, food, medical supplies, and relief workers throughout the southern portion of this tropical country. Relying heavily upon our CH-53E's and CH-46E's, the Squadron flew countless missions into the country during daylight hours to remote landing areas that were devastated by the damage created by storm's high winds, tidal surges, and river flooding. With the country's local water supplies contaminated and their crops destroyed, the Bangladesh government asked for the assistance of the United States Government in bringing relief to their people. Working hand in hand with the Bangladesh government, Non-governmental Organizations, 3D Marine Expeditionary Brigade, and the U.S. Embassy, the Marines and Sailors of this Squadron, along side the entire 22d Marine Expeditionary Unit embarked on the USS Kearsarge, immediately planned and executed a monumental relief effort. In addition to the flying the aircrews executed, personnel from across the Squadron were also involved in a vast array of supporting efforts. This included Marines and Sailors filling water bags on the ship, loading and unloading supplies ashore, treating injured Bangladeshis with our Corpsmen, coordinating local air traffic control ashore, flying United Nations and USAid observers throughout the region, and moving high ranking officers and government officials throughout the region. In the end, the efforts of the Squadron were instrumental in reducing the loss of life and bringing immediate relief for thousands of Bangladeshis. For more stories photographs of this mission, please take some time to review the recent galleries on the 22d MEU webpage.

As we now have closed up this operation, and move to our next destination, we are taking some time to continue preparations for any future contingencies that may always arise. To that end, our Maintenance Department and our AIMD detachment continue to provide outstanding support, ensuring we have the aircraft necessary to meet our Squadron's operational requirements. For them, and all the Squadron, this has been a challenging deployment, with little relief from the daily grind of 24/7 maintenance and operations, but each Raging Bull has risen to the challenge in every occasion in support of Squadron success.

As we begin to close on our arrival date back home, I know that questions are starting to be asked about when and where we will return, what leave dates will be available, and generally, what is the future of the Squadron as it looks beyond this deployment. My staff and I are working these issues and more, and we will pass that information back to the families when it is appropriate. It is my goal to make those announcements as early as possible, via the KVN so as to allow families to make appropriate plans. There is still much work to be done here on deployment, and once we return, but I will ensure that our Marines and Sailors are getting the information that they need to make timely decisions that impact their careers and their families.

KEEPING YOU INFORMED...

If you should have any concerns, questions, or just need some moral support during our deployment, I encourage you to contact your Key Volunteer, Family Readiness Staff Non-commissioned Officer, our family hotline, or this website (www.22meu.usmc.mil) to obtain up-to-date information you need to stay in touch. Please keep in mind that official and factual information regarding the Squadron's movements, activities, and operations will come solely from the 22d MEU (SOC) Commanding Officer through me. ***Information sourced from me will only be delivered through the channels mentioned previously.***

As always, I along with your Raging Bulls sincerely appreciate the prayers and support we continue to receive from back home.

Rage On!

James G. Flynn
Lieutenant Colonel, USMC
Commanding Officer

Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 261 (Reinforced)
22d Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable)